

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O P 181635Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4963

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS PRIORITY

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS PRIORITY UNN

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY

USMISSION UN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0185

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EC, LU

SUBJ: DIALOGUE WITH EC PRESIDENCY--FEBRUARY 16-17 POLITICAL

DIRECTORS MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG--ANGOLA

REF: STATE 37563

SUMMARY. IN STORMY SESSION ON ANGOLA, POLITICAL DIRECTORS WERE  
UNABLE TO REACH A COMMON POSITION ON TIMING OF MPLA RECOGNITION  
BECAUSE OF FRENCH INTRANSIGENCY. ACCORDING TO MFA SOURCE,  
FRENCH POLITICAL DIRECTOR APPEARED TO BE OPERATING  
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UNDER STRICT, INFLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIGHEST

FRENCH AUTHORITY. WHEN GERMANS AND BELGIANS MADE CLEAR THEIR OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION OF MPLA WITHIN 2-3 DAYS, FRENCH INFORMED THE EIGHT THAT GOF WOULD GO IT ALONE. RESULT OBVIOUSLY WAS FEBRUARY 17 ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOF ANGOLA RECOGNITION. DENMARK, HOLLAND AND ITALY EXPECTED TO FOLLOW SUIT IMMEDIATELY, WITH OTHER EC MEMBER STATES REVERTING TO PURELY BILATERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DETERMINING IF AND WHEN TO OPEN RELATIONS WITH NETO GOVERNMENT. FRENCH BREAKAWAY ACTION HAS FOR THE MOMENT FRAGMENTED THE EC, BUT EFFORTS WILL BE MADE AT FEBRUARY 23-24 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING TO RESTORE SEMBLANCE OF UNITY THROUGH STATEMENT OF A COMMON EC POLICY TOWARDS ANGOLA. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO MFA SOURCE, FRENCH TACTICS ON ANGOLA CAUGHT OTHER EIGHT BY SURPRISE. AS REPORTED IN MESSAGES FROM BRUSSELS, KINSHASA AND ELSEWHERE, THE EIGHT GOT FIRST INKLING THAT RAPID GOF POLICY SHIFT ON ANGOLA WAS IN THE MAKING AT MEETING OF EC AMBASSADORS IN LUXEMBOURG ON FEBRUARY 13. AT THAT MEETING FRENCH CHARGE D'AFFAIRES PRESENTED HIS COLLEAGUES WITH SOMETHING OF AN ULTIMATUM TO THE EFFECT THAT NINE WOULD HAVE TO JOIN FRANCE IN IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZING MPLA OR FRANCE WOULD GO IT ALONE. OUR SOURCE CREDITS SERIOUS, INDEED VEHEMENT, PROTEST OF AMBASSADORS FOR APPARENT GOF DECISION TO DELAY RECOGNITION FROM SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, UNTIL THERE HAD AT LEAST BEEN TIME TO DISCUSS THE MATTER AT THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING. THE EIGHT WERE ALL THE MORE SURPRISED BY THE FRENCH POSITION BECAUSE UNTIL THEN GOF HAD SEEMED COMMITTED TO COMMON EC POLICIES ON ANGOLA.

2. AT POLITICAL DIRECTORS MEETING FRENCH APPEARED TO HAVE SLIGHTLY MORE LEAWAY THAN HAD BEEN APPARENT AT THE FEBRUARY 13 SESSION. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT DELAY OF RECOGNITION FOR MORE THAN THREE OR FOUR DAYS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR FRANCE. IN THE FACE OF STIFF GERMAN AND BELGIAN RESISTANCE, AND FULL DISCUSSION OF U.S. POSITION PER REFTEL, IT BECAME CLEAR VERY EARLY THAT THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR

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A COMPROMISE ON TIMING. NONETHELESS, ACRIMONIOUS AND REPETITIOUS DISCUSSION OF ANGOLAN PROBLEM CONTINUED THROUGH MOST OF FEBRUARY 16 MEETINGS. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE EIGHT MIGHT HAVE MAINTAINED A COMMON EC FRONT MINUS FRANCE, FOR WHICH THERE ARE PRECEDENTS, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR DENMARK. THE DANES CONTENTED THAT THEY COULD NOT GET OUT OF STEP WITH OTHER SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES WHICH THEY BELIEVED WOULD MOVE QUICKLY TOWARDS RECOGNITION.

TION AS SOON AS THE FRENCH POSITION WAS PUBLIC.

3. GOL SOURCE SAID IT WAS CLEAR THROUGHOUT MEETING THAT FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE WAS ACTING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE ELYSEES. OUR SOURCE ADDED THAT CONSENSUS OF THE EIGHT IS THAT GISCARD IS PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SHIFT IN GOF POLICY. THEY SPECULATE THAT GISCARD WAS PRESSURED BY MODERATE AFRICAN LEADERS SUCH AS SENGHOR, BONGO AND HOUPHOUET WHO NEEDED COVER OF FRENCH RECOGNITION TO JUSTIFY THEIR OWN SHIFT ON THE MPLA. THEY FEEL FRENCH MAY ALSO SEE NETO RECOGNITION AS A MEANS OF REFURBISHING FRANCE'S TARNISHED THIRD WORLD IMAGE RESULTING FROM DJIBOUTI, FRENCH POSITION ON THE SAHARA, AND FRENCH OPPOSITION TO SOUTH AFRICAN SANCTIONS.

4. AT ONE POINT DURING THE DISCUSSIONS, IT APPEARED THAT GOF MIGHT ACCEPT DELAYING RECOGNITION UNTIL FEBRUARY 23 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING. HOWEVER, WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT FRG WAS NOT PREPARED TO COMMIT ITSELF IRREVOCABLY TO RECOGNITION EVEN AT THAT TIME, ALL HOPE OF A COMPROMISE ON TIMING COLLAPSED. OUR SOURCE INDICATES THAT THE FRG POLITICAL DIRECTOR HINTED THAT INTERNAL GERMAN POLITICS PRECLUDED EARLY FRG RECOGNITION. WITH OPPOSITION PROTRAYING THE SCHMIDT GOVERNMENT AS "SOFT ON COMMUNISM" AND WITH THE POLISH TREATY SOON TO COME BEFORE PARLIAMENT, THE FRG APPARENTLY FELT ITSELF IN NO POSITION TO ACCOMMODATE THE FRENCH ON MPLA.

5. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS ARE EXTREMELY DISCOURAGED BY THE TURN OF EVENTS. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY EMBARRASSED BECAUSE ANGOLA APPEARED TO GIVE THE NINE AN ISSUE  
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WHERE THE EC COULD EXERCISE SOME LEADERSHIP IN EUROPE. THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES, THE NEUTRALS, SUCH AS AUSTRIA AND SWITZERLAND, AND TO SOME EXTENT PORTUGAL HAD SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW THE EC ON ANGOLA. THE FRENCH, OR AT LEAST THE QUAI, AS REPRESENTED BY THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS HERE, REPORTEDLY RECOGNIZE THAT EC PROGRESS TOWARDS DEVELOPING CREDIBLE COMMON FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS HAS BEEN UNDONE. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS WILL, THEREFORE, RECOMMEND STRONGLY TO THE MINISTERS MEETING HERE ON FEBRUARY 23 THAT SOME ACTION BE TAKEN TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE. THEY HOPE THE MINISTERS WILL DRAFT A STRONG POLICY STATEMENT ON ANGOLA URGING THAT ALL FOREIGN INTERVENTION COME TO AN END AND THAT THE NETO GOVERNMENT TAKE IMMEDIATE, CONCRETE STEPS TOWARDS NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. IF THE POLITICAL

DIRECTORS' VIEWS PREVAIL, THE MINISTERS WILL TRY TO PRESENT THEIR DIVISION ON RECOGNITION AS TECHNICAL, I.E., DIFFERENCES AMONG THE VARIOUS STATES ON CRITERIA FOR ACCORDING RECOGNITION, AND TRY TO PROJECT AN IMAGE OF THE NINE STILL UNITED ON SUBSTANCE.

6. COMMENT: CONVERSATIONS HERE INDICATE THAT THE FRENCH TOOK CONSIDERABLE POUNDING FROM THEIR COLLEAGUES ON THE ARBITRARINESS OF THEIR POSITION AND UNWILLINGNESS OR INABILITY TO WORK OUT A COMPROMISE OR EVEN CONSULT MEANINGFULLY. THE FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE WAS APPARENTLY AT A LOSS TO PROVIDE IN ANY CONVINCING WAY A RATIONALE FOR HIS GOVERNMENT'S UNSEEMLY HASTE IN RECOGNIZING THE NETO GOVERNMENT. THERE IS A WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT "GISCARD'S DECISION" EVEN TOOK THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY BY SURPRISE. AS THE DUST SETTLES, THERE MAY BE GUILT FEELINGS WITHIN THE FRENCH BUREAUCRACY WHICH COULD PERHAPS BE PLAYED ON IN URGING GOF SUPPORT FOR STEPPED-UP ASSISTANCE TO ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE, AS SUGGESTED IN PARIS 4800 (NOTAL).  
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